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Sent: Sunday, March 05, 2006 11:42 AM

To: MLPACComments@resources.ca.gov

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Subject: MLPACComments: Monterey Bay Area Conservation wrt Spearfishing Contests in SMCAs

To All MPLA Committee Members:

As the discussions continue regarding the degree of conservation appropriate for the Monterey Bay and surrounding area, please note that Monterey has once again made "Scuba Diving's" list of the world's top diving destinations. Monterey is #2 in North America, and is regularly a featured destination each year in the magazine. When combined with the fact that Monterey is featured in many documentaries regarding ocean life, rather than considering the reduction of conservation in the Monterey Bay area, the discussions should focus on increasing the degree of conservation along the entire coast line from Cannery Row to Point Sur, as a complete "no take" zone, barring kelp harvesting through spearfishing. The latest package ("S") is, in my belief, going to devastate the area's marine life, making the Monterey Bay area a waste land that will move it from the top 100 dive world destinations to the #1 position of world locations to avoid. Many studies show that divers are significantly generous in spending locally in the areas they visit, including those visiting from less than 100 miles away. Consider the economic impact that will occur should there be a drop of less than 20% of the yearly world's diving community visitors to Monterey Bay area cities and locations. I know loss of marine diversity/life will negatively impact my visits (average of over 50 dives a year for more than a decade now in the the Monterey area) and spending greatly.

It is my contention that with the introduction of greater spearfishing, the resulting marine life devastation shall result in a greater than 20% drop of yearly world dive visitors to the area, of which the spearfishing contest will fall significantly short in making up. Further, once the area is depleted, the spearfishing contests will drop off toward "nil." I implore the committee to do nothing and leave current status quo regarding spearfishing alone; or if you must make a change, do adopt the current Package #2 over all others.

Respectfully,
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